ADEPT DEMAND MANAGEMENT PILOTS

FOLLOW UP STUDY AUTUMN 2016

CONTENTS

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Introduction

In April 2015, the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) completed a programme of work aimed at supporting its members to reduce demand on place based services. The programme involved three phases; a research phase; an initial prototyping phase with two councils; and a final phase that expanded the prototyping to six further councils. The third phase was supported and sponsored by Ringway, who brought the vital perspective and active involvement of a private sector service provider. Eighteen months on from the end of the formal programme, ADEPT and Ringway commissioned a short follow up study to monitor progress and consolidate learning.

The Study: aim and methodology

The purpose of the study was to look at the progress the pilots had made since the ADEPT commission formally ended in April 2015 and to consolidate learning, particularly in respect of innovation, for the benefit of the ADEPT membership, Government and private and public sector partners.

In each pilot one or two telephone interviews were conducted with key personnel. In Essex, where the Council matched the ADEPT resources dedicated to their pilot, I carried out four face to face interviews in order to obtain a richer picture of what had been happening there.

The interviews focused on progress over the previous 18 months and any learning, particularly in respect of innovation. The study also included Devon, who, although they were part of phase two of the overall programme, were active members of the learning events in phase three.

The Story So Far

The local authorities involved in the pilots were a mix of unitary and county councils, covering urban and rural areas. The focus of the pilots was as diverse as the places they covered.

In Buckinghamshire and Hull, the pilots focused on specific issues. In Buckinghamshire, the focus was the development of a new Local Transport Plan and how this could be transformed from a largely unread document, to something which felt owned and used by the community at large. In Hull, the focus was on transforming the relationship with city centre businesses to facilitate the significant and disruptive public realm works needed to prepare the City for its 2017 tenure as UK City of Culture.

In Devon and Staffordshire, the focus was on changing the Council's

relationship with the community. In Devon, that was within the context of the community budget pilot, working across a number of communities. In Staffordshire, the aim was to work across the three tiers of local government, to co-create new approaches to managing demand for services such as highways. In the case of both Councils, the focus broadened over time, with the initial approach being taken up corporately to act as a Council wide catalyst to innovation.

In Essex, the focus on a single community, suffering from multiple deprivation, produced a new approach, which is being used effectively in a number of other initiatives relating to flooding and local transport. Further examples of innovation in Essex, include an Essex wide approach to devolution; managing a portfolio of 74 libraries to deliver significant savings; and an on demand, rural transport system.

In Suffolk, work on specific initiatives in highways as a means of improving joint working between Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Borough Council was paused, largely due to contract changes in the way in which highways issues were managed. The focus shifted to a local parish based initiative to pool funds for improvements across a number of parishes, whilst at the same time, investigating how East Sussex's approach to involving communities more directly in highways management could be replicated in Suffolk.

In Lambeth, the programme objective was to employ co-production strategies to deliver improvements. The intention was to work with local community-based organisations who put in some of the improvements themselves, providing employment and skills to local people.

A fuller description of each pilot, the progress they have made and the enablers and barriers they experienced on their innovation journey is at Annex A.

Innovation – what the pilots tell us

Most of the conclusions reached at the end of the initial phase of the pilots in March 2015 hold good and have been reinforced during the last 18 months. Those conclusions included the importance of creating space for innovation; the need for leaders to embody the change they want to promote; the need to ensure that assurance systems do not act as a brake on innovation; and to look critically at the role councils allow the community to play.

The interviews with the pilots have added colour and richness to those conclusions, as well as sharpened the lessons:-

- **Having to know is death to innovation.** This relates to people's need to pin down outcomes, process and resource requirements up front, as well as to "know" what is going to happen. In these pilots, it was a willingness to meet the community without the props of a set agenda (Essex and Lambeth); to imagine scenarios wildly outside

normal ways of working (Buckinghamshire); and to admit that the authority does not always know best and needs help (Hull), that liberated innovation.

- **We kill off private sector innovation by piling all the risk onto them.** In Staffordshire, they took the decision to retain strategic risk, rather than try to pass it all on to their contractor. Their experience taught them that they needed to provide the space for contractors to innovate; overburdening them with risk merely killed innovation at the outset.

- **The private sector are a key ally,** but are not often intimately involved in the sharp end of innovation. In Lambeth, Transport for London provided much of the funding for the schemes undertaken and took a hands off approach to provide flexibility for innovation to thrive. In Buckinghamshire, Ringway Jacobs' willingness to let go of elements of their contract and to work both with the Council and Parish Councils helped achieve the devolution of minor highways maintenance services to Parish Councils. In Hull, the business community brought their influence and resources to bear to smooth the path for significant public realm changes. Nonetheless, there appears to be much more scope for private sector involvement in innovation.

- **Don't assume…anything…..** Assumptions about what needs to be done and who holds the expertise and resources to do it hold back innovation. For example, in Devon, when a Youth Centre was threatened locally, communities responded, often creating an offer that was better than the original one. In Buckinghamshire, all sorts of barriers to the devolution of highways maintenance services were placed in the way. In each case, the Council and its private sector partner found a way through, dismantling assumptions along the way. In Hull, the business community brought not only expertise about what was important to businesses, but also resources to help manage the issues.

- **A community led approach can strengthen the role of Ward Members.** In Lambeth, the result of giving the community a leading role in the design of local schemes was a reinforced role for Ward Members. Ward Members became champions for their local community, playing a pivotal role both in helping to frame discussions and in enabling the community's voice to be heard.

- **Permission to play – both political and executive - is vital.** Determined political and executive leadership in each pilot created space for innovation. For example, in Staffordshire, a new administration committed to a "small state" and the community doing more for themselves, opened the door to working with the Parish Councils and community to deliver services differently. The embedding of an objective relating to devolution to the community in Buckinghamshire has enabled significant progress to be made. Close

working between Cabinet Members, Ward Members and officers in Lambeth enabled the community to step up to co-designing local infrastructure schemes.

- **People need to get out of the way.** The good news is that innovation is endemic. The real problem is that people – with the very best of intentions – get in the way, whether that is holding too tightly to the systems they manage, or to their own expertise or due to fear of getting things wrong. Helping people to understand how to support innovation creates space for innovators to forge ahead.

- **It is like snakes and ladders.** Learning is cyclical and not a once and for all process. It often feels like two step forwards, one step back. That can be frustrating. For example, in Essex, the Craylands experience clearly demonstrated the overwhelming benefits of an unstructured approach to working with the community, but that approach had to be re-learned by people working in Canvey Island. In Suffolk, the strides towards a more generous way of using resources across a range of Parish Councils appeared to be lost when personnel changed. It had to be re-learned in the context of the new highways contract.

- **People, not systems, make things happen.** In every case, it was the tenacity and commitment of the pilot lead that helped to make things happen. Some people did it through a wonderful ability to engage others and infect them with enthusiasm; others were adept at navigating tricky issues and systems; and others simply refused to be beaten.

- **Change the story, change the outcome.** Stories were significant in every pilot. In Buckinghamshire, a fairy story, developed in one of the workshops, liberated a much more creative and effective approach to the Local Transport Plan; the stories of the women in Craylands enabled their neighbourhood to be transformed; in Hull, the business community began to tell a different story about their relationship with the Council.

- **Watch your language.** Innovators are often seen as mavericks, the awkward squad, pirates. Changing the language by, for example, calling them pioneers can, at a stroke transform people's attitude and the pioneers' ability to be effective. Talking about success and failure does not help either. Learning is a much more powerful concept, in which success and failure become irrelevant. Communities, too, can be alienated by language. In Lambeth, the Council acted on lessons learned to change the name of their next infrastructure programme from "Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme" to the much simpler and more engaging "Our Streets".

- **Beware the unchallenged myth.** Whilst stories are the bedrock of change, stories which become myths, (e.g. when a previous triumph is

used as an excuse not to challenge current activity) can kill innovation dead.

- **Recognition, recognition, recognition.** Innovation needs to be rewarded, as much when it fails as when it is successful, and recognised e.g. by devoting resources to it. Essex won a national ADEPT award for its flood related work in Canvey Island. This helped significantly to embed and validate the approach they had taken within the wider Council. When Devon devoted resources to bringing in outside help to embed Asset Based Community Development, it clearly signaled their seriousness about changing the relationship with communities. In Lambeth, a Councillor was named Community Champion of the Year in 2014 for his role in driving forward an innovative Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme (NEP).

- **Scale up the process, not the product.** Scaling up initiatives is a notoriously tricky problem. What is notable here is that it is the learning process, not the product of the process that has been scaled up. Essex have been particularly successful in taking their approach of direct, unstructured engagement with the community into other initiatives. In Devon and Staffordshire, the initial more focused pilot has developed into a Council wide approach to innovation, which has, in its turn, generated and resourced other initiatives.

Conclusion

This programme originated from an urgent need to explore how demand for services could be managed better and costs reduced. Through its emphasis on innovation and experimentation, the programme has enabled and built on approaches across a range of local authorities. Those approaches have demonstrated clearly that:-

- Innovation can help to control demand for services.
- Cheaper and better community based solutions can be found as communities meet their own demand.
- Productivity increases with the piloting of new techniques, particularly using digital technology.
- Clearer accountability, which can include the community, reduces costly delay and confusion.
- Placing risk management and the pricing of risk at the right place in the system can save you money.
- Scaling up is entirely possible, provided you scale up the learning process, not the product.

The Future

The pilot authorities are continuing to innovate and experiment. The pilots may have changed significantly from where they started, but progress has

been made everywhere. What happens next is for each authority to determine, but their intention is to build on their learning and continue to foster the conditions that allow innovation to flourish.

At the end of the very first piece of research in this programme, I quoted Antonio Machado, the poet who said "Walker, there is no path. The path is made by walking". The pilots in this programme have done a lot walking. They have created many different paths and revealed much of the landscape of innovation. Whilst others may not be able precisely to replicate those paths, they can learn from the landmarks by which the pilots navigated and the conditions they created to make the walk easier and more fruitful. With that kind of scaling up, I believe that, not only will the pilots continue to innovate, but that other organisations and communities will be able to take heart and do the same.

ANNEX A

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The pilot

Buckinghamshire chose to focus its pilot on the development of a new Local Transport Plan (LTP). In part this was to add variety to the pilots overall, but it also offered an opportunity to stimulate a mood change across the Council, rather than focus on a front line service.

Officers felt that the old plan had had little real community involvement and was not used effectively to drive investment, either within transport or more widely across the Council. They wanted to look at how they could produce a much more community led and iterative plan. The initial work in the pilot comprised two workshops: one to explore and set a new vision for the plan; a second to develop a process for taking the vision forward.

Progress since March 2015

Having decided a new direction for the LTP, officers took a draft Plan based on the new vision and methodology to Members. After a healthy debate, the proposal was approved unanimously. Such unanimity was unusual for something that sparked significant debate.

Unfortunately, shortly after the workshops, a major restructure of the organisation began. This significantly disrupted work, as the restructure was time consuming and it was also not always easy to engage wider teams in the plan's development, due to their focus on the restructure.

As a result, the development of the plan was not wholly as it was conceived at the first workshop. In particular, the radical new approach to engagement was not deliverable in its entirety. Nonetheless, the plan developed is significantly different from previous ones as follows:-

- The plan was consultation led, involving an innovative digital prioritisation exercise. People were able to show what was important to them easily using phones or tablets. There was a good response rate, a third more than previous (much longer) consultations. This was highly unusual for a pre-draft consultation. It was also a more balanced group than normal in terms of age, gender and background.

- The enthusiasm and creativity released in the early workshops was reflected in the public response. Over 4,000 people were reached through Twitter and more than half of the respondents came through social media.

- The consultation generated a huge amount of data about what mattered to people.

- The plan is much shorter than before. There is one overall strategy, which will be filled out with more detail as the evidence is built and further consultation takes place. Buckinghamshire have taken a living plan approach, flagging up with a symbol those areas that are particularly likely to grow as their understanding develops. They feared that this might be seen as a fudge, but people welcomed the openness and the approached helped Members.

- The cost (cash and officer time) to prepare, engage and publish was significantly less than the previous LTP process, and arguably it was a better process with better outcomes.

- The expectations of the Buckinghamshire Community and businesses have been managed through the process in terms of what the LTP can deliver and the role the community itself will have to play in reaching solutions.

The LTP has left a significant legacy. Those involved have been empowered to experiment with different ways of engaging the community. Their success has made them feel more motivated and confident to experiment further.

The pilot has also supported and exemplified a wider movement across place based services to think more radically about devolution to Parish Councils and the community. Politically, Members have agreed to an objective in the Corporate Plan, which encourages the community to self-deliver, where appropriate, and endorses devolution to Town and Parish Councils. This approach is now being embedded in the strategic DNA of the organisation.

The new approach has, nonetheless, its challenges. It has been hard for some Members to let go of services, which previously they would have controlled. It can feel to them as though their ability to do things for their constituents is being eroded. For example, the Council identified that there was significant scope for Parish Councils, schools and parents etc. to replace the Council provided school crossing patrol service. This has, however, been difficult for Members to agree to – it was a service much valued in the community, for which Members were happy to be responsible. As a result, the Council is currently working to increase sponsorship of school crossing patrols as opportunities arise.

Buckinghamshire have also been driving innovation with private sector partners. For example, they worked with Ringway Jacobs to devolve some local and minor highways maintenance services, such as grass cutting, to the Parish Councils. Ringway Jacobs not only agreed to the deletion of these services from their contract, they have also supported the Parish Councils to ensure that the handover is effective. There was a long list of barriers raised to this devolution, for example on health and safety grounds, lack of equipment, TUPE, insurance etc. The Council sat down and worked through

every barrier and successfully found a way through. Developing a short two page contract to cover the new services proved particularly difficult. They did manage to reduce it from 40 to nearer 10 pages and now have a template that can be used for other services.

Buckinghamshire County Council recognised that there were significant risks to devolving highways services. They believed, however, that those risks were outweighed by the potential benefits and set about, successfully, to manage those risks. The result is that around 90 out of 150 Parish Councils have taken over the services, with early adopters keen to do more.

Enablers and Barriers

Enablers

- High level support for a more visionary approach was crucial in initiating the pilot and in giving permission for people to be creative.

- The fact that it was a prototype gave the licence to try "wacky stuff". Rather than put people off, this energised them and released a flow of latent creativity. This energy persisted, in spite of the distractions of the restructure.

- Buckinghamshire followed an approach of harvesting people with passion in the Council. They held a hackathon, bringing people together for a couple of days to create a rough draft of the new Plan. By the end of the event, they had two thirds of the material. Furthermore, some attendees took responsibility for completing work in their areas, rather than leaving it to the core team. Ryan Bunce, the lead officer, felt that the enthusiasm and creativity released by the original workshops continued to flow through the hackathon, resulting in much more practical support and involvement across the wider Council.

- Being more creative about consultation and more ambitious about how the community would get involved outdid their expectations, especially the digital approach. And it cost less and took less time than the usual consultation process.

- A corporate commitment at political and executive level to devolution to the community has reinforced and given permission for further innovation.

- The willingness of a private sector partner to let go of control and support innovation has been crucial to success.

Barriers

- The organisational restructure inevitably had an impact in terms of the time and resources available. Time pressures meant that the full co-creative process with the community, which was originally envisaged, could not take place. This was a disappointment, but nonetheless, the consultation process was much more creative than hitherto and reflected the spirit of the initial workshops.

- There can be reluctance to embrace innovation at all levels – political, executive and front line – when that innovation erodes people's perceived ability to influence and control; where it challenges their received professional wisdom; or, quite bluntly, could reduce job opportunities.

- A lack of ability to see beyond the obvious risks to the potential benefits can prevent progress. The devolution of highways maintenance services demonstrated that many of the key risks and barriers can be overcome where there is a will to do so, but so often health and safety, insurance and legal issues are used as excuses for not being more ambitious.

Future Progress

As a result of the pilot, there is a much better LTP, with much greater buy in. It is early days to judge its effectiveness, but it is already being used more widely that the previous plan e.g. by the Development Control Team and by District Councils.

The area strategies are still under development, but it is already clear that the consultation process undertaken means that they will be better respected. The key learning here was to accept an iterative process. In the past, the fact that the Districts might not have been ready to articulate strategies for their area could have been an excuse not to move forward with the plan. The living plan approach actually enables change and development to take place much more effectively. Benefits available immediately can be secured, whilst the rest can be developed later.

More widely, the approach to consultation used in the Transport Plan has recast the mindset on consultation across the Council and released significant enthusiasm and motivation for doing things differently. It also transpires that, contrary to received wisdom, people welcome an emergent plan – they are happy with uncertainty, provided there is some kind of frame to the process.

The pilot sits within a political and executive commitment to much greater devolution to the communities. As such, the pilot has been both a shining example of what can be achieved and a catalyst for further similar experiments.

DEVON

The Pilot

The aim of the Devon pilot was to support a community of leaders across Devon to take forward the Devon community budget initiative within the communities of Tavistock, Totnes, Collumpton, Okehampton and Ilfracombe. Devon County Council wanted to create a new relationship between citizens and their public service providers and create new models of delivery. The ADEPT pilot was focused on stimulating change – how to have a different conversation with communities - rather than being service specific. The ADEPT support began with a workshop designed to challenge existing assumptions about service delivery and create prototypes which might offer more effective ways forward. On-going support included a further workshop with Council staff and coaching for the pilot lead.

Progress Since March 2015

Because the Devon pilot sat within a wider frame of Delivering Differently and the Community Budget initiative, it is difficult to see it separately from the wider corporate agenda.   The ADEPT approach did, however, help Devon to focus on narrative around place, connectivity and the role that communities play in developing the Council's thinking. It took Devon back to basics, to ask why they were there - the starting point was to ask whether they should do X at all, rather than thinking of different ways of doing X. It has also helped the authority to think about the links with wider wellbeing and health determinants and across different service strands.

For example, about the time of the pilot, Integrated Care for Exeter (ICE) was introduced with a funding envelope of £1.5m. There were four strands to the initiative, focused on the hospital services, street homelessness, risk stratification and community well-being. Devon brought in Cormac Russell, a leading proponent of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) to work with community connectors. His approach, language and culture quickly seeped into the organisational culture. Despite the radical difference in his approach, or perhaps because of it, people were inspired to change the way things were done.

Despite the success of this approach, it has not always been easy to persuade people to spend differently and to let go of organisational boundaries. There was a clear tension between the desire to do things differently and the ability of officers to let go of the idea that they had the expertise and were paid to make decisions. The expertise of people in communities was hard for some officers to recognise.

There is also a tension between strong programme methodology and a more emergent approach. Although programme methodology is good at ensuring delivery, it does not have the ability to reflect on whether it is the right stuff that is being delivered. It can result in a stand off between "trust me I deliver"

versus "let me explore, though I cannot guarantee the outcome". What Devon learned is that a blend is better; an ability to hold the tension between the two approaches – a clear framework for delivery, but which allows space for exploration. This more complex approach needs champions or the organisation tends to default the programme approach.

Enablers and Barriers

Enablers

- Outside catalysts sometimes in the form of new people with new approaches, sometimes in the form of shared learning e.g. the ADEPT learning events.

- Strong leadership from the top. This gave permission to act, to explore, to step out of the box. Leaders were also actively engaged in innovation, embodying the change they wanted to see.

- Asking fundamental questions such as why are we here? What should we be doing? Who should be doing it? Innovation does not just happen in the innovation team.

- Space and time for innovation in all tiers of organisation.

Barriers

- As part of the wider agenda, the Corporate Director was keen to explore different methodologies across the organisation. This approach did, however, present significant challenges to colleagues. The desire to do things differently bumped in to an instinctive feeling that officers are paid to make decisions and know best.

- The inability to understand the contribution the community can make and to significantly underestimate the resources they have at their disposal. For example, when a youth centre was threatened locally, communities responded, often creating an offer that was better than the original one.

- Making innovation into something special – it should be part of everyone's job.

Future Progress

Structurally, a key Corporate Director is leaving and Devon is going back to a flatter model. The Director for Public Health will lead some of the place agenda such as economy, planning and communities. Devon will continue to

build links across functional services to bring health and the wider local government world together with communities.

The Devon pilot was never specifically focused on a single service. Rather it was attempting to bring a new approach to engagement with communities into the Council as a whole. Whilst the focus on the ADEPT pilot may appear to have disappeared, it has stimulated and supported a more fundamental shift within the Council towards a radically different approach to working with the community. It is hard at this stage to quantify the benefits, but some of the examples, such as the emergence of Libraries UnLtd and a new model for Youth Service, show what can be achieved.

ESSEX

The pilot

The aim of the pilot in Essex was to explore how community commissioning might help to reduce demand, through a three stage approach: a review of commissioning strategies for place based services; pilot workshops within the community; and ongoing coaching of key team members to engender and deepen key competences. The focus of the prototyping work was the community of Craylands, a place which suffered from multiple deprivation in Basildon. The stories of a small group of women led to the development of an action plan, jointly owned by Essex County Council (ECC) and Basildon Council, which would address some of the issues the women raised. A learning event to reflect on what officers had learnt through the process, led to the commitment to develop the approach across other areas, in particular flooding in Canvey.

Progress since March 2015

Craylands

The action plan agreed after the community workshop in Craylands was due to be taken on by Basildon Council. In the event, the lead officer moved, so Essex County Council initially took it back to try to drive action forward. It was subsequently enthusiastically taken on by Basildon's Housing Department, who found more ambitious ways to tackle the issues than had been originally envisaged. For example, the initial plans to liven up a footbridge, which separates the community from their park, were transformed into options to deliver a ground level crossing. Issues relating to through traffic causing nuisance on the estate led to an option to shut off one roundabout. More fundamentally the housing department changed the way they consulted the community, along the lines of the original prototype – going out to the community without a pre-set agenda and listening to the community's ideas. This approach has also been adopted by the housing association involved in the area.

18 months on, not only are some of the key issues being resolved with community involvement, but the approach of partners in the area has significantly changed.

Canvey Island

The initiative on Canvey Island was aimed at improving the lives of residents in relation to flooding. Significant government gaze was placed on partners with statutory flood responsibilities after a severe flood incident, affecting 1,000 properties on the Island in July 2014. A strong multi-agency partnership emerged with a "Six Point Plan for Canvey". The Community Resilience Programme, which is a key sub-programme of this partnership responds to

recommendations of various Government and ECC reports at the time of the incident. Crucially, the learning from the experience at Craylands and its success in engaging the community effectively has been applied to it. This includes techniques of deep listening, meeting residents without an agenda and not promising things the partners cannot deliver. The group of partners have delivered educational activities, a weekend civic hack and open days.

At the civic hack, people had an opportunity to physically map flooding. This led to a much richer picture of the Island; the exposing of myths about flooding; and the beginnings of a much more dynamic relationship with the community. However, the approach was not without its challenges. Officers and Members found the absence of a specific agenda – things to offer or on which to consult – difficult. The community, on the other hand, still rely on the Council to sort things out and are not always willing to take responsibility. More widely, it is not always easy to ensure that the different public agencies work effectively together. A recent flooding incident led to differing communications being put out by different agencies, which was not helpful.

Most importantly, however, the stories that people – community members, the Council and Members – tell about flooding in Canvey Island are starting to change. And that is having a direct effect on action to tackle those issues in a more collaborative and effective way. One small example is that the community have tackled media hype by challenging inaccurate and inflammatory photographs in the press.

Finally, the Canvey Island initiative won a national award for innovation. This recognition has helped to reinforce and validate the approach that was taken.

Other Initiatives

There are a significant number of innovative initiatives underway in Essex County Council. Many of them build on the open approach to community, engaging them as co-creators, rather than as recipients of services. Those initiatives include the following:-

- At a strategic level, data about existing programmes across the whole County has been brought together to support an Essex wide approach to devolution. In particular, this has enabled a better analysis of housing growth and economic growth. The new approach of co-creation has also enabled much richer, grown up conversations with partners. For example, in Braintree the dialogue about town centre regeneration was allowed to develop organically, rather than being dictated by a preset, rigid agenda. This enabled the creation of links between issues, which might not previously have been made. It also led to a strong commitment to deliver a masterplan before Christmas, a timetable that previously would have been seen as unrealistically ambitious.

- A three year community hubs programme to review Essex's 74 libraries has been developed, based on five models, developed through extensive community engagement. The approach allows flexibility for different communities to meet their needs in different ways. More widely, this is building good will in the community at a time when the Council is having to cut services.

- A programme to find solutions to the rising levels of childhood obesity in Essex by encouraging greater levels of physical activity has been co-designed with children. The programme is in partnership with PDR, Cardiff Metropolitan University to ensure that, through the process, Essex officers acquire service design skills and create a tool kit for the future.

- A review of the supported local bus network, which makes up 15% of the overall network is underway. It has included 15 open public sessions, inviting members of the public to tell their stories and help design the future service.

- A total transport project with Suffolk County Council and FutureGov to deliver cost effective transport in rural areas, is being conducted in partnership with local communities, enabling local knowledge and expertise to design appropriate solutions.

- A range of community led prototypes in a number of localities, have been set in motion. The prototypes are focused on food and friendship; waste minimisation; youth activities to promote learning and skills development; peer support networks; intergenerational housing; review of wearable technology; asset mapping of local activities run by non-statutory bodies; and community led weight management.

Enablers and Barriers

The pilot in Essex, alongside other innovations, has provided a rich set of stories, which as they are told and retold in the organisation and community encourage further similar activity. They also provide insight into what helps and what hinders innovation.

Enablers

- An ability and willingness to take a risk and try something completely different. Not only has this resulted in significant positive change in a deprived area where it was much needed, it has also enabled the Council to develop a new approach to innovation and apply it effectively and flexibly in other areas. The recognition that it is the process, not the product that should be replicated has been key.

- High level leadership, creating the space and permission for trying new things and, if necessary, failing. One of the roles of corporate leadership is to create space and to hold back elements of the wider corporate system which might inadvertently block innovation.

- A willingness not to know and be open to what might emerge in dialogue with the community. The importance of this willingness in the context of the pilot in Essex cannot be understated. Whilst it felt scary for people at the time, it has been the key to unlocking innovation.

- The tenacity and enthusiasm of individuals, not only to be involved in the pilot, but also to take the approach into other areas of work and do battle with the barriers along the way.

- Keeping below the radar and a willingness simply to get on and do. This involves a sophisticated understanding of who to bring on side, when and a moment by moment feel for what will unlock progress and conversely what will hinder it. There is no set pattern here. It varies in relation to the nature of the innovation and the people involved.

- Telling and re-telling stories about innovation, what has worked and what has been learned. These help to create a culture of innovation and reassure people that it is ok to take risks.

- Compelling stories that people tell about their life and where they live. For example, the stories people tell about their experience of the rural transport network, is having a direct impact on the way in which the new system will be developed. The stories people are now telling about their experience of the Council, e.g. through the open engagement on the future of libraries is creating significant good will for the Council, at a time when that is most needed.

- External support through coaching and regular, though not necessarily frequent, learning events with the other pilots.

Barriers

- People who inappropriately prioritise the wider system of assurance and financial management above outcomes, thus driving out the space for innovation. There is often a lack of understanding about how innovation should be supported. In the absence of that understanding, people will stick with what they know, which means that instead of being facilitators of innovation, they become the barriers to it. It is the role of corporate leadership to ensure that this does not happen.

- The tension between the need to know and an approach to innovation which is emergent: where the potential outcomes may not be immediately quantifiable; where the process going forward may only be known a few steps at a time; and where people are asked to let go of

what they think they know. This tension is evident at the level of systems, but also at a personal level. People can find it challenging to be asked, for example, simply to meet the community with no clearly defined outcome or plan of action. They need support to do this.

- Narratives about particular processes or parts of the Council, which have become myths – i.e. stories that are not challenged to see if they still hold good and remain appropriate in the current context.

- Power playing and turf wars, where people put personal or business advantage above the right outcome for the community, whether that is the local community or the Council's own community.

- Recruitment and performance management systems which do not support innovation. Recruitment may be focused too much on technical skills or acceptable behaviours, maintaining the status quo rather than on characteristics that encourage innovation. Performance management tends to be focused on improving people's perceived weakness, rather than on rewarding innovation and finding ways for the organisation to capitialise on people's strengths.

Future Progress

The initial prototype in Craylands has not only resulted in practical positive change there, it has also provided an approach which is being replicated elsewhere in the Council. In terms, therefore, of the pilot itself and its scaling up, the work has been highly successful. Furthermore, there is plenty of evidence of other innovation within the Council. The future in Essex looks positive, with a significant amount of activity underway across a range of service areas. There is a risk that as that activity spreads across the Council, the learning might not be captured effectively. It would be worth thinking about how to do that, either through a more in depth stock take in a year's time or, perhaps more appropriately, through a learning history which is developed as the Council's approach to and experience of innovation develops.

HULL

The pilot

The purpose of the pilot was to create a more active and productive dialogue with the city centre business community over major public realm works in support of the 2017 City of Culture. The aim was to reduce significantly the demand on officer time needed to smooth the passage of works that would inevitably result in significant disruption to the city centre. Hull City Council planned to do this through sharing with the business community ownership and responsibility for effective management and communication of any disruption. When we left Hull in March 2015, the transformation of the relationship with local businesses was underway. Businesses were already beginning to work more closely with the Council and to play an equal part in ensuring that clear information was available to everyone.

Progress since March 2015

Hull City Council established two groups with the city centre businesses. There was a core group of traders comprising most people who had attended the initial workshop. They were joined by a couple of others as work progressed. The local Business Improvement District (BID) stepped in to encourage people to attend, particularly if they had specific concerns about the impact of the works. Those attending the core group fed into a wider transport and logistics forum, (a group brought together consisting of those who have an interest in transport be it goods or people, able-bodied or with a disability), to enable them to influence how work was programmed. This created a strong and iterative dialogue between the affected businesses and the Council.

There was an equally good relationship between the contractor and the Council and between the contractor and businesses. The contractor appointed public liaison officers to work closely with city centre traders. The liaison officers attended all of the meetings and shouldered some of the burden the Council would otherwise have had to carry. The Council had hoped to establish an information centre in city, but were unable to find suitable premises. The contractor took on this role and negotiated a site in a large shopping centre with the manager there.

The impact of the pilot has been significant. The number of businesses claiming that they have been ill-informed about works in the city has dropped, particularly in comparison to previous schemes. The larger businesses have been particularly supportive and taken on responsibility for keeping others up to date. This has helped significantly to reduce the call on Council resources to sort out problems. In the past, traders might have gone straight to the press or local media to register their concern, but now they turn to their fellow businesses or e-mail the Council, confident that they will receive a swift response.

The relationship between all the parties is much closer and more effective. Engaging with a much wider range of people at the start has enabled some key people to become actively involved in a way they might not have hitherto. In particular, it has enabled them to exert influence over matters that affect them, changing them from frustrated bystanders to active participators. This involvement has significantly eased the load for the Council.

As a result, businesses do not appear to have suffered as much from the disruption as would have previously been the case. The input from business directly to the contractor as well as the Council has enabled more effective programming. There has been some drop in footfall, but this has been managed without a difficult backlash.

More recently, attendance by businesses at the core group and transport and logistics meetings has begun to decline. The latter may be because it has focused on the issues of the bus companies and has become less immediately relevant to the traders. The smaller monthly meeting has dropped from monthly to bi-monthly and has not now met for three months. The drop in attendance could be due to the group having served its purpose, with people feeling well informed and able to find out what they need through other channels. The Council are considering with their key business partners how best to proceed.

Enablers and Barriers

Enablers

- Taking time and devoting the resources up front to building a relationship with a wide range of people. The initial workshop and meetings laid the foundations of the longer term relationship.

- Beginning the dialogue before the works started, so businesses did not feel like an afterthought.

- Honesty from the Council that they could not manage the works effectively without substantial support from business. Fears that this might make the Council look weak were very quickly dispelled, as businesses displayed an immediate willingness to get involved.

- Self belief and determination to see it through and not give up when things looked difficult.

Barriers

- It does take time and resources up front to provide strong foundations for future work, but bypass or short change this at your peril.

- People can be very focused on their own agenda and needs, particularly in the competitive world of business. Ensuring that everyone is clear about the future and shares a vision of that future helps to provide a framework for containing those different needs.

- Keeping people at the table. It is important to understand whether people are staying away because they are frustrated and feel that their needs are not being met, or because they feel that they do not need to be there as things are going well or that they have other means of getting information.

- Being alert to changing circumstances and accepting that you may need to change the approach as circumstances change.

Future Progress

The public realm works are well underway. The Council is considering what to do about the drop in attendance at the core group meetings, but it may simply be that it needs to meet less regularly now. The Council is clear, however, that it has established a new relationship with businesses in the city centre that will stand them in good stead for the future. They also believe that they have created a new template for effective dialogue that can be used in future across the Council and it partners, including the community.

LAMBETH

The Pilot

In Lambeth, the goal was to transform how it spends its money through a pilot project to demonstrate how the key principles of the co-operative council can be put into practice. Rather than the Council determining the nature of the investment, the Council instead asked local residents how they would like to spend the money. Public engagement, consultation and co-design sit at the heart of the Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme (NEP) strategy. The aim was for the community to take a lead role in the engagement process, with the learning from this creating a new way of working on all joint infrastructure schemes in the future. When we left Lambeth in March 2015, work was well underway to develop a community-led programme of infrastructure projects, funded by Transport for London.

Progress since March 2015

Since March, progress has been significant. The Council have completed the design and construction of the schemes identified at the outset of the pilot. These schemes range from small initiatives to combat speeding to major public realm works, such as the creation of Van Gogh Walk. The aim of this latter scheme was to transform a dark, unappealing area into an attractive community space.

In approaching the schemes, the Council decided to take a community led approach, consisting of four phases: identifying and drawing together community champions; creating a vision for the area through workshops and co-designing projects to deliver that vision; formal public consultation; and construction and delivery.

Phase one consisted of leaflet drops, posters and workshops to draw together a group of community members who would be willing and keen to provide leadership for the scheme. In Van Gogh Walk, a planning approval resulted in £120,000 of Section 106 funding being provided for improvements to neighbouring streets, prompting the formation of the residents group, Streets Ahead. The Council later added additional funds to enable the delivery of the scheme.

The process of creating a vision and co-design would follow, involving the community, Ward Members, the Cabinet Member, technical experts and relevant private contractors. The key here was that the Council went to the community with no pre-set vision and was prepared to invest in developing the community in order for them to acquire new skills to shape the pilot project. The vision for the area was set by and with the community, supported by their Ward and Cabinet Members. The community were also closely involved in the resultant design of the schemes.

Lambeth Council established a project steering group in 2010 made up of local residents and Councillors and chaired by a member of Streets Ahead. The steering group worked alongside Lambeth Council's Transport team to develop designs. The experience was challenging for all, but steady progress was made. The formal public consultation became a much sleeker process because the community had been involved at the outset and had become champions for the scheme. This enabled construction to begin and proceed as smoothly as possible.

18 months on, most teething problems with the initiative in Van Gogh Walk have been resolved. These problems tended to be related to noise issues from cafes and restaurants, loading and unloading restrictions and enforcement. The schemes have become business as usual, with daily monitoring e.g. parking enforcement, waste and cleansing, etc.

Enablers and Barriers

The Council learned some valuable lessons as they rolled out their programme of works, as follows:-

Enablers

- The role of the Cabinet Member and Ward Members was vital. Rather than becoming redundant, which is what some feared might happen if the community were given a more prominent role, Council Members became real champions for their areas. In subsequent pilots, the Council reinforced that role by working with Ward Members before they went out to the community. As a result, those Ward Members were champions from the start.

- Language turned out to be really important. The original programme of work was called the Neighbourhood Enhancement Programme (NEP). As the Council are now working on a new area with new community groups they have used the lessons learned from the NEP to rebrand the new project "Our Streets" which has helped the community connect with the project.

- A willingness to take risks was crucial. There was a risk that the community would want much more done than was affordable. In the event, it was the Ward and Cabinet Members who stepped up to manage those expectations, by being clear with the community about costs at an early stage and helping them to prioritise.

- In some instances, officers could feel unsure as to when it was appropriate for them to step in to offer technical and professional advice. Officers were sometimes reluctant to intervene even when a particular project being consulted on was not feasible or would disproportionately impact upon a particular group. To some extent this

is a question of confidence and experience. Phase 1 of the NEP in Brixton and Stockwell offered important opportunities for officers to become more experienced working in this new partnership with residents, enabling them to act with greater assurance in their role in phase 2. It does, however, also highlight the tension of balancing populist ideas alongside technical, practical needs.

- The whole Council was on a journey to becoming what they termed a "Co-operative Council". As a result, the project sat within a context which facilitated innovation.

- The relationship between officers and Members was key. Officers need the freedom to take risks and try out new approaches. This can only be achieved through a close understanding between officers and Members about what they are trying to deliver.

- Transport for London, who part funded the project, took a different approach to monitoring the schemes in order for the pilot to develop.

Barriers

- Lack of clarity about budgets and timelines could create uncertainty. In the first phase, the Council underestimated how long the initial community engagement would take. The project needed more time up front. Overall, however, that time was made up at the formal public consultation, which took much less time, brought up far fewer issues than usual and significantly reduced any risk of challenge. In later stages, the timeline was set accordingly.

Future Progress

The Council and community learned a lot from the initial schemes. These lessons have been incorporated into the new schemes underway. The Council has strengthened the way in which officers work with Members and appointed an engagement officer for each area for the next project. The timelines are realistic, recognising the need to dedicate a significant proportion of time to the up front community engagement. There are 60 different schemes in hand, ranging from small initiatives focused to address technical issues to public realm schemes. The Council is now delivering projects within parks in the same way the NEP was delivered.

STAFFORDSHIRE

The pilot

The original focus of the pilot in Staffordshire was to develop a new relationship with the community: one that supported community resilience; challenged existing assumptions about the roles and resources of the Council and the community; and managed demand on place based services, with the focus on highways. This did not develop as originally anticipated, as the learning history published in April 2015 described; the Parish Councils in the areas selected felt that they did not have the resources to engage effectively. As a result the Council decided to pursue a wider scope, to shape the Council's overall approach to demand.

Since April 2015, the concept of the pilot has evolved within the thinking of the organisation as a whole. The emphasis has moved from demand management within the highways context to a much wider shift from customer to citizen; to the community doing much more for themselves and becoming more independent. As that shift has happened, so the focus has moved away from highways to tackling dependency on social care and public health services.

Staffordshire has always had a strong culture of volunteering, for example around managing localised environmental and amenity issues. Volunteering suggests, however, that the County Council retains responsibility and Staffordshire wanted to move beyond that. For example, the volunteering network came together, less because it was about the need to tackle specific issues and more because it brought together a group of people with mental health issues, who, in working together, were able to support each other and thus reduce demand on strained mental health services. This reflected the kind of approach Staffordshire wanted to pursue.

The Council realised that communities did not want conversations with lots of different services – they wanted a single conversation with "One Council". Three strands of work have supported this shift in focus:-

- There has been a strong focus on the voluntary and community enterprise sector. The Council agreed that they needed to invest and co-produce work more closely with the sector. To that end, they recommissioned a capacity building contract with the voluntary sector, which went live on 1 August 2016.   This contract protects £1m of investment per year for three years. The aim is to reduce demand on adult, children, highways and environment services;

- The Director of Family and Communities led a piece of work to look at how to build community capacity in respect of the services under her management. Members agreed the strategy proposed, using the strap line "People helping people". A detailed plan has been developed with partners to deliver the strategy.

- The Cabinet Office had a big drive to understand how to commission social action. Staffordshire put forward a successful bid and have been working to develop a strategy locally which will feed in to a national tool kit.

The original pilot around highways now sits within this larger framework. This includes working with Members to equip them to have a different kind of conversation with the community and with the Parish Councils. This change of approach is beginning to have a significant impact; for example, reducing the cost and improving efficacy by enabling communities and Parish Councils to take greater ownership of their surrounding local environment.

Enablers and Barriers

Enablers

- The political will to drive forward what is a potentially challenging agenda. In the context of the challenging financial position, Members understood the strategic importance of working differently with the community. When the current Conservative administration was elected, one of their manifesto pledges had been a smaller, smarter state, promoting and supporting communities. In the last two years, prompted by looking at the next phase of austerity, there has been a real sense amongst politicians that they needed to go further and faster on this agenda of community capacity building and developing personal responsibility. This political leadership has been strongly supported by the executive.

- The leadership shown by individuals in the organisation, who have embraced the new agenda and been prepared to take risks in furthering it, has been crucial in creating stories which demonstrate how the new approach can bring success as well as in encouraging others.

- Using narrative to re-inforce the culture and approach of the organisation has been used in Staffordshire for a long time. Changing the language so that people understood that this was a real departure from previous ways of working was important. Stories about small scale successes were also important in building momentum.

- Cabinet Office support for social action helped to re-inforce the national importance of what Staffordshire were doing, as well as bringing resources. It also helped encourage Members' commitment.

- The existing strength of the voluntary sector was crucial. They brought a key perspective to the work, along with credible leaders.

Barriers

- Whilst one of the key enablers has been leadership and commitment from Members, the democratic system as a whole has provided some challenges. Active citizenship does not sit well with a four year democratic cycle, within which Members feel that they have to deliver in order to convince constituents to re-elect them. It creates a real tension with asking communities to step up. Success elsewhere has been helpful in guiding Staffordshire through this tension.

- Overcoming people's resistance to moving from a more traditional view of commissioning to one of co-production with the community. People have, completely understandably, a lot invested in their professional expertise. There is also a significant degree of fear in the system – fear of getting it wrong, of losing a job, fear of being named and shamed as an individual or Council. These concerns can get in the way of people's willingness to sign up to an approach which feels risky and asks them, at times, to set on one side their professional knowledge in favour of the view of the community.

- Major issues can take attention away from pursuing the new agenda. For example, issues with Staffordshire hospital have demanded a huge amount of time and attention, which would otherwise have been devoted to different ways of working.

- Innovation is about risk and incentives. There is a tendency in current contracting to push all the risk to the contractor away from the Council. In Staffordshire's experience, this kills the potential for innovation from the contractor. They have preferred to retain strategic risk within the Council to enable a more innovative approach across both the Council and the contractor.

- People, whether they are members of the community, Council Members or officers can block progress. It is not possible to convince everyone and it can be frustrating when someone stands in the way.

- Providing hard evidence to create acceptable business plans has been difficult. With innovation, it is hard at the beginning to demonstrate the benefits. Staffordshire had to work with Members, colleagues and managers of assurance systems to convince them. The fact that the agenda moved so rapidly meant that they intuitively knew it was the right thing to do. As time has gone on, evidence has begun to flow, but it was important at the outset not to hold on too rigidly to the business planning regime. Staffordshire believe that they have reached a tipping point in the organisation where people understand where a different, more flexible approach is required.

- One of the problems with the ADEPT pilot was how to have a conversation in a place. There are 8 localities in Staffordshire with a

helpful infrastructure, but enabling a One Council approach is difficult. Whilst there was strong support from Members, the approach presented a real challenge to the organisation.

Future Progress

Staffordshire is building on its successes so far to continue to influence the wider organisation and to keep ambition and enthusiasm high. The three strands of work, identified above are moving forward. Staffordshire are optimistic about the future. The original pilot did not materialise in the way it was originally intended, but it has developed into something much bigger and more sustainable. The amount of momentum is significant across all areas of activity.

The key challenge remains encouraging people in the statutory agencies to let go. Any change that has happened is because individuals have changed – there is no other way. It is easy to say, but profoundly challenging. There is a need to create the space – mental, physical and temporal – for open conversations with the community. Whilst this is the biggest challenge, it also provides the greatest opportunity.

SUFFOLK

The pilot

In Suffolk, the pilot initially focused on work on specific initiatives in highways as a means of improving joint working between Suffolk County Council and Ipswich Borough Council. This was paused, largely due to contract changes in the way in which highways issues were managed. The focus shifted to a local parish based initiative to pool funds for improvements across a number of parishes. At the same time, East Sussex were invited to Suffolk to explain their new approach to highway services. Whilst they were committed to deliver effective core services, they were exploring with communities and Parish Councils the extent to which they might be involved in or resource the delivery of discretionary services. Suffolk were interested in whether such an approach would work for them.

Progress since March 2015

Progress since March 2015 has been difficult. The County Council entered a new contract with Kier May Gurney to provide highway management services across Suffolk. The change of service providers led to some initial issues with service delivery as part of the transition.   Furthermore, Ipswich Borough Council has focused primarily on internal transformation and has not, therefore, been in a position to work further with the County Council on the issues identified at the original workshop.

The initiative to pool funds in Halesworth to resource priorities across the Parish Councils of the area has also not progressed in the way envisaged. This is due to a huge turn around in Parish Council Members. The County Councillor concerned, who also now has a new Cabinet post, has become more involved in a project in Spexhall to encourage more community involvement. One particular issue relates to a resident, who has mounted an ANPR camera on his house and is busy collating data on speeders. On the one hand, this fits exactly with the community doing more, but it has challenged the police and the Safer Road Partnership. The Partnership has agreed to see if it is possible to find a way through the data protection issues. They are also keen to use it as a case study in relation to community action.

The new contract with Kier May Gurney also meant that work to develop East Sussex's approach to highway services in the community, had to take second place to ensuring that the new contract was working effectively. In some ways, this is entirely in keeping with the East Sussex approach. Their advice was first to ensure that the Council is clear on what constitutes core services and that these are delivered effectively before launching a community highways approach. Their learning revealed that, once in place, the community would be much more open to a dialogue about how to deliver more discretionary services. Now that the core service in Suffolk is becoming better established, attention is beginning to turn to a more proactive debate with the community. For example, community engagement has informed the

design of a new service centre and there is a plan to introduce community ambassadors, liaising between Councillors and communities.

Enablers and Barriers

The key enablers and barriers were as follows:-

- Political and executive leadership is vital to create the environment for innovation.

- Services need to be in the right place for innovation. For example, there was no point in talking to the community about their involvement in highway services if the core services were not effective.

- Good relationships need to be in place. Whilst governance can either facilitate or hinder those relationships, it is the personal relationship that counts.

- Professional expertise can get in the way of the community doing things for themselves. The fact that a resident had installed an ANPR camera presented a challenge for professionals – was this acceptable?

- Learning sessions with other pilots helped significantly. There was constructive challenge with the opportunity to develop personal strategies in a safe and supportive environment.

Future Progress

As the contract with Kier May Gurney settles down, there will be scope to look much more creatively at working with the community. The principles of that approach – namely a commitment to deliver certain core services, but then to work with the community to deliver or resource additional discretionary services – also transfers to other services areas for example Adult Social Care for people with complex needs. Specific core needs will be met, but the Council will work with the voluntary sector and the community to create the capacity to provide earlier and additional support where appropriate. That same approach is also being explored in relation to community resilience.